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The Playground

To Promote Play and
Public Recreation



Amherst, Nova Scotia

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A TRAMP WITH THE BOY SCOUTS

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The Playground

Published Monthly by the

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THE SPIRIT OF '76

RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN URUGUAY*

P. A. CONARD

Representing the

National Committee of Physical Education of the Republic of Uruguay

Uruguay is the smallest of the ten South American republics. It is that little red spot in the lower right hand corner of South America which many North Americans cannot decide whether to place in Argentina or Brazil. Yet Uruguay is as large as New England and Maryland combined, and with its one million and a quarter of inhabitants, one-third of whom live in one of the most beautiful and progressive capitals in the world, it is in many respects among the most progressive of nations. I wish very much a typical Uruguayan, handsome and clever, acquainted with the history and problems and people, were presenting this subject today, but as I have been honored with the representation of the National Committee of Physical Education of that Republic before this Congress, I bring the cordial greetings of a great and public-spirited citizen, the President of the National Committee, and those of his distinguished colleagues.

A Diversion-loving People

Heredity and environment, climate and disposition, combine to make the Uruguayans a diversion-loving people. The theatre and opera, the inevitable moving picture, the race course, the brilliant "Corsos" in the beautiful parks, the thronged watering-places, gay promenades, balls, excursions, and crowded band concerts given freely in the public plazas, and the popular free school of dramatics, are illustrations of a spirit of abandonment to being entertained.

The most popular of athletic sports is soccer foot ball—in fact, aside from rowing, which has a limited following, it is practically the only sport. The English community, of course, has tennis and cricket. The few Americans practice baseball. Once in awhile a foreign ship in port plays a game of Rugby. Some men learn fencing, fewer boxing or wrestling, and some learn to swim—though this number is less than might be expected when one considers the resort character which Montevideo assumes during the gay months of summer—but the fact re-

* Address given at the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, Richmond, Virginia, May 8, 1913

RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN URUGUAY

mains that for the people of the country the best known and most popular game is association foot ball, and in that sport Uruguay has acquitted herself with credit among her powerful neighbors.

A National Committee on Physical Education

To the present time, athletic and recreative activities have been, almost without exception, from private and scattering efforts, but

I wish to speak more definitely of a significant and progressive modern movement on the part of the government to stimulate on a nation-wide basis up-to-date and all-round physical education. Some two years ago, on the accession to power of the present administration, a law was passed appropriating \$50,000 a year for five years to begin the propagation on this comprehensive basis of physical education. To administer this fund a strong, non-political committee was named, led by a prominent Uruguayan with a wide commercial and political circle of influence, and composed of various ex-officio members, such as the President of the National University, the Director of the National Military School, the presidents of the leading foot ball and athletic clubs, and a few well-known business and professional men interested in the subject. This committee was given large powers and is laying extensive plans, including a scientific study of the national type of physique, the promulgation of sanitary legislation, the organization of health and sanitary movements. But they have wisely begun in a very practical way by lending every encouragement to athletic clubs, and every other organization with a purpose in keeping with their own. This will take account of all existing agencies and encourage and co-ordinate their activities. They have held a most successful annual athletic meet on the amateur basis, like the great Olympic Games. They have organized tournaments of aquatic sports, cross-country running and bicycling. They have done something to stimulate the interest in the rowing clubs, and even in the conquest of the air. They organized a free swimming school, placing a professional teacher in charge, both at the men's and women's bathing beach of one of the most popular watering places to teach all who care to learn to swim. By arrangement with one of the very few private gymnasiums, under a French instructor, free gymnasium work was made possible for about two hundred young men, and over seven hundred immediately enrolled. I

RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN URUGUAY

may say that this work was planned more on the basis of hard work than of recreation, however.* All these separate efforts and encouragements have been considered by the committee, but a beginning and a small part of a general plan for the complete adoption and execution of which much more time will be required. It has been felt that a permanent and thoroughly constructive work will not be done, except by beginning with the children in large numbers throughout the capital and the country, in some such comprehensive movement as that undertaken by the Playground and Recreation Association in North America.

Plans for a Recreation System

The National Committee has arranged for the first children's playground in the heart of the most thickly populated section of Montevideo. Apparatus was ordered from North America and a North American trained physical director, Mr. Jess T. Hopkins, was named technical director for this and future playgrounds. At the time of my leaving the country, two months ago, the equipment had arrived and the committee expected to inaugurate the playground within a few weeks. Already a registration of some five hundred children had been taken. It is expected that this will be a model for a complete system of such centers in the city.

Leaders Must Be Trained

As would be understood at once, for the direction of such a scheme, trained leaders must be provided. A system cannot be transplanted bodily from abroad and made to work in any given country, and it is but the part of wisdom that the committee should undertake the training of leaders from the young men of the country.

No Attention to Recreation in the University

A lack of attention to physical education is also especially noticeable in the University, as compared with our North American institutions of higher learning. The only gymnasium connected with the institution is in the preparatory department and there is no athletic field. Physical education—to say nothing of simple recreation—seems to have been con-

* Another indication of the eagerness and aptitude of the Uruguayans for recreative exercise, is the fact that when the Y. M. C. A. opened a gymnasium near the end of last season, 175 men immediately entered the classes, and by the end of the eight weeks besides the regular calisthenics and drills, were playing creditably sixteen different games.

RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN URUGUAY

sidered beneath the dignity of a great institution of learning. With the spread of the playgrounds and the establishment in connection with them of popular free gymnasiums, it is expected this need will be supplied.

Progress in Providing Recreation

The leading private school in the country is just now undertaking large plans of extension and improvement. It has secured a considerable subsidy from the government and plans to bring out an experienced head master from England. They are planning a new departure in the traditions by organizing on modern lines the department of athletics and physical education under trained and experienced leadership.

The higher education of women in Uruguay may be said to be but beginning. There are, aside from public school teachers, very few women who have taken more than secondary work. Within the past few months, however, there has been organized a Women's College of the National University. It was a serious question with the promoters of this separate college as to whether physical education should be introduced. Within the past few days I have received a cable from the director I mentioned as in charge of the recreation centers, asking me to find and send out by September an associate for him, as he had completed arrangements for taking charge of that department in both this college and the private school I spoke of.

The Influence of the Summer Camp Helpful to the Movement

A movement organized by the Young Men's Christian Association, with large recreative features, which promises to have a significant influence of even an international character in South America is the university student camp. They recently held the third of these gatherings in Piriapolis, Uruguay, with representatives from the Government Universities of Brazil, Argentina, Chili and Uruguay, the respective governments furnishing the expenses of travel, and supporting the movement in other important ways. The minister of foreign affairs and the minister of war of Uruguay, together with other distinguished persons, made an official visit to our camp, and were very favorably impressed by the eagerness with which the organized, sane and wholesome recreative activities were being entered into by every man in camp. The program, which was altogether voluntary on the part of the men, was organized by

VILLAGE RECREATION IN LEBANON, OHIO

our physical director, and he succeeded in keeping every man interested and thoroughly busy in the most strenuous and most enjoyable series of games of all sorts that they had ever taken part in or seen. He was determined to carry out the wishes of the chairman of the national committee, that the young men of those countries should come to know there were other balls beside foot balls, so he saw to it that such games as volley ball, basket ball, indoor baseball, and the like, became so popular that the men were all wanting the rules in Spanish or Portuguese, so that they could teach groups of men these games when they returned to their own countries.

A Question of Manhood

Mr. James Bryce in his recent book on South America says that the most interesting question to the observant traveler in that Continent is what kind of manhood will those young nations produce. Who can doubt that on the physical and moral character of the men of Uruguay this modern and progressive undertaking, on a nation-wide basis under the national committee, is to play a significant and large part?

VILLAGE RECREATION IN LEBANON, OHIO*

S. C. BRITTON

Director, The Civic Trust of Lebanon on the William E. Harmon Foundation,
Lebanon, Ohio

Seventy-five dollars in prizes to the township schools for excellence in school house beautification seemed to be a good deal of money for no real good. But now that this contest is nearing an end, its virtue is seen. I believe I do not exaggerate when I say more has been done in this direction since last May than in any five years previous. Not only did the teachers and pupils get stirred but the school boards also. Arbor Day never meant so much before. One school planted fifteen hard maples, another made gardens, planted shrubs and trees. And so the story continues. All fourteen schools have done something. One school board doubled its playground, removed some ugly sheds, put on a new roof and displaced a painted wall blackboard with a slate one. Others have done as much. At least

* Address given at the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, Richmond, Virginia, May 9, 1913

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half a dozen schools were papered and as many more got cement walks, while fences have been overhauled generally.

Eighty Acres Just for Play

An eighty-acre field just to play in was an unnecessary luxury indeed. Yet proportionately this field is used more than our city parks. Many contend that there is no lack of ground for play in a town of 3,000. But most of us know better. True, there is considerable land, but that land is fenced, pastured or farmed. And the town boy becomes a street urchin as well as his city cousin. Everything centers in this park now. Baseball, tennis, track meets, picnics, boys' gardens, experiment station, swimming, boating, skating,—all center here. The children in the sand piles, the boys on the apparatus, the young men and women in the games and the older folks enjoying the beauty of nature are familiar sights.

The old time spelling bee is being revived with splendid results. Eight out of eleven townships in the county were represented in a county bee. This means that each of the townships had a preliminary match and each school in each of the eight townships had revived this very dormant function. Likewise with the debating society. It is being resurrected from a grave in which it was interred when the great exodus from country to city killed many of the honored recreations of by-gone days.

Sociable and Profit- able Gardening

Of course boys' gardens are for the city boys who have little opportunity to commune with nature. What need is there for a central garden for the boys when they all have one in their back yard? But back yard gardens are not as much to any boy as a garden with the other "fellers" which he can call his own. Today there are forty-one boys managing their own gardens in the park. This is about twenty-five per cent of all eligible and I believe a better showing than in the cities. The boys are busy, they have something of their own, and are learning by studying the other gardens the most scientific methods. One thing leads to another. Some of the gardeners were boy scouts. They figured that if they would place bird houses near their gardens they would have fewer cabbage worms. Ten boxes have been built and erected in the park by the boys besides many at their homes. The scouts have been doing many other fine things since the recreation work has been inaugurated. Last summer

VILLAGE RECREATION IN LEBANON, OHIO

they camped in the park for two weeks assisting in building the Lids Dam.

A Welcome and Something to Do at All Times

A gymnasium and club house is just being completed. Here all the work of the Harmon Trust will center. Besides a complete round of gymnasium classes for the boys and possibly a few for the girls, women and men, there will be a number of social and educational privileges. Bowling, billiards, pool and other smaller games will serve to keep the youth of our village in a more healthy environment than that which usually surrounds the commercial game room with its cigarettes and loose language. Lounging and reading rooms will be provided and already the boys have asked if they may turn a part of the unfinished basement into a carpenter shop. A good stereopticon and moving picture machine will be installed with which we hope to give a wholesome entertainment and education. A Sunday afternoon meeting will be held in the winter. A number of the meetings will deal with sex hygiene, narcotics and stimulants. In the summer the meetings will take on the nature of a Sunday afternoon Chautauqua and will be held in Harmon Park.

On the sixteenth of this month we shall hold the first Warren County Interscholastic Athletic Meet and Gala Day. This idea is not original but you may be interested to know how we are working to make it a successful day. From present indications it will be the biggest thing of its kind yet held in this section. The teachers' institute asked me to give a talk on boys. I attempted to show the need of a county athletic meet with the result that the institute appointed a committee to work with me. This made the work easy and assured the success of the venture. Business men of the town have agreed to give ten prizes to the schools making the most points and have also placed their advertisements on the programs thus helping to defray the expenses. Another organization will furnish a band and the equipment is being arranged by the Civic Trust. Much of our information about how to arrange and conduct such an event was gained from *The Playground and Rural Manhood*.

The County Lecture Course

I have given you a brief review of the most important points in the work carried on by the Civic Trust of Lebanon. However, there is one more feature which to me is the most interesting

VILLAGE RECREATION IN LEBANON, OHIO

of all; probably because it was worked out entirely without outside help and because it proved so successful. I speak of our country lecture course or university extension course, as we are pleased to call it. All rural workers realize the dearth of social get-togethers in the country. To supply this need was the purpose of this course.

The problem was how to secure talent that was worth while at a figure within easy reach of a school district with a membership of only twenty or thirty families. And this is how the problem was solved and more than solved because some of the schools made enough money to assist them materially in beautification work or in the purchase of an organ. A canvas was made of the immediate vicinity for suitable talent which could be secured for expenses only. The surprise was that a rural community contained so much talent—talent moreover that was free!

One man had been to Panama. Now if he could just secure a stereopticon outfit and slides one lecture was assured. The machine was readily loaned by a local dairy, and the Cincinnati Library offered us free use of any and all slides in their large collection. The head of this dairy gave an illustrated talk on scientific dairying. The superintendent of schools volunteered an illustrated talk on the development of agriculture. A retired mining engineer was found who had something interesting and four young men and a young lady organized a team for singing and reading. The conservation of life and health was offered by a physician, and a professional lyceum lecturer said he would be glad to volunteer several numbers. The course has attracted such attention that several men in the county have volunteered for service next year if they can be used.

Lectures and Neighborliness

Regular lyceum posters were printed and all was in readiness. The schools and churches of the county were notified that a course of six numbers would be furnished them for five dollars, provided they would furnish transportation. Ten numbers were offered from which six were to be chosen. Twelve country schools and three churches conducted a total of sixty-nine lectures. Every course paid for itself and some made money. The people were greatly pleased and a genuine social advance made in the neighborhood. In fact of even more importance than the

VILLAGE RECREATION IN LEBANON, OHIO

lecture itself was the social time before and after. The people seemed to be thirsting for a wholesale visit with their neighbors and they had the opportunity to their heart's content. Graphophones were brought in and a preliminary program given. The children on mild nights made the air ring with their games outside until the lecture began. The whole family would come to enjoy the evening and break away from the monotony of a long winter night in the lone farmhouse. In one district every family purchased season tickets except one. The tickets were placed within the reach of all, being only fifty cents for the six numbers and the school children were admitted free. In one district several children had never before seen a stereopticon picture and in many they had never gone to school at night with their parents to enjoy a social time together.

Next year we are planning for a larger and more successful course. We have made some mistakes and intend to profit thereby. One thing we have learned is that the course should be started early in the year. At least half of the numbers should be given before Christmas because of the bad weather in our State during the following months. We discovered a great aid in the giving of pictures by acetylene gas was to purchase a presto-lite tank, thus avoiding delays, explosions and the smell of gas. A good way to promote a course is by getting the co-operation of the school officials and teachers.

**Everybody Wishes
to Co-operate** The encouraging feature of the work in Lebanon is the co-operation of our citizens.

It is almost impossible for one director to find enough time to co-operate with those who offer to assist and who have some good idea which to them is especially dear.

Thousand Dollar Gifts Let me conclude by saying that Mr. Hartman, who has endowed our work, has offered to give \$1,000 apiece to five towns in Ohio that will initiate a similar work, provided the town be of less than 7,000 population and the work attempted involve an expenditure of at least \$10,000. He recently has intimated that because of a greater demand than was anticipated he would probably increase his offer to include more towns.

RECREATION EXPERIMENTS IN A SMALL CONSERVATIVE NEW ENGLAND TOWN

REV. RAYMOND G. CLAPP

Stafford Springs, Connecticut.

For Men and Boys

Stafford Springs, a Connecticut woolen mill borough, has been making some interesting experiments with a social center for its young people. Three years ago a proposal to open a gymnasium, game, and reading room for the boys of one of the Protestant churches was enlarged to include all the population so far as its interest and support could be won. A series of public meetings resulted in the formation of a board of nine directors for a Stafford Young Men's Club, the aim of which should be to furnish wholesome recreation for the young men and boys of the town of Stafford, but more especially of the borough of Stafford Springs. The town population numbers 5223; but the three outlying villages and surrounding country are too distant for much use of this enterprise: so that it ministers practically to a poulation of 3000. From the beginning there have been many prominent citizens who have discouraged the undertaking as being too ambitious for a town of this size; but it has now come to be regarded as an established institution.

Things to Do

A floor and a half of an old mill building two or three minutes distant from the main street was hired at an expense of eighteen dollars monthly the year round and fitted up at an expense of about \$250, including wooden partitions, stoves, stairs, additional wiring and plumbing, gymnasium apparatus. One pool table was loaned and later a second, as well as a small home-made billiard and pool table. Some of the furnishings were given or loaned. The horse for the gymnasium was of home construction, about ninety dollars being thus saved. Basket-ball, parallel and horizontal bars, trapezes, stationary and traveling rings, punching bags, jumping standards, medicine and captain ball, bells, clubs, and wands were installed. Crokinole, caroms, bagatelle, checkers, quoits, puzzles, dominoes have been used somewhat, but not as largely as the pool, gymnasium and bowling alley. The last-named was put in last year temporarily at a cost of ten dollars besides the material contributed. A linoleum bed, plain wooden return way,

RECREATION EXPERIMENTS IN NEW ENGLAND

and wood and burlap bumpers gave no great ornament or finish to the two alleys; but the league and individual bowling so revived the club that the directors voted fifty dollars to construct a wooden bed, but were pleased to accept a gift from a former resident of a second-hand Brunswick-Balke alley which, transported from Springfield, cut in two and pieced at an expense of sixty dollars, gave two alleys equal to regular commercial alleys in everything except their being only forty feet in length. A charge of one cent a string is made on the new alleys. Otherwise the only fees are the admission fees of five cents weekly from those from ten to fourteen or fifteen years of age and ten cents weekly for those fourteen and above (or fifteen, in case of schoolboys). The Club is open from four to six Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and from one to six Saturdays for juniors and from seven to ten o'clock each of these evenings for seniors. A smoking room for those over eighteen and reading matter for all is also provided. There have been about one hundred and forty members each year; the continuity of membership has been improving.

The Club is non-sectarian. The board of directors includes representatives of all the churches, Protestant and Roman Catholic, and the membership enrolls Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish boys of eight or ten nationalities. The necessary \$550 for maintaining the Club from November first to May first comes by subscription. The first year a paid gymnasium instructor was hired for only one day weekly. The second and third years our janitor and supervisor has been also a trained athlete. Occasional banquets or entertainments are given for members and friends.

Including the Women and Girls Toward the close of the last season the Club rooms were opened one afternoon weekly to young women and girls. Of the evening offer no advantage was taken. The list of afternoon attendants numbered forty-five. An organization of ladies has just been formed to open the rooms one afternoon and evening weekly to young women and girls with a schedule of volunteer supervisors and leaders. This gives the prospect of a larger usefulness. The Club has accomplished a good deal toward uplifting the associations and occupations of a considerable number, beside furnishing a common meeting place for different racial

RECREATION EXPERIMENTS IN NEW ENGLAND

and social groups to help on the amalgamation and Americanization of the large foreign population. The allowing of card-playing alienated temporarily some of the directors, but very little request for cards and no abuse of them has been made since the prohibition was removed.

The town has recently been presented with a commodious and well-appointed hospital, a small park in an outlying section and a park of one hundred and twenty acres in the center of the borough with a granite bridge and entrance, and cemetery gates and curbing. The directors of the Young Men's Club are investigating the advisability of remodeling the roomy and substantial barn of the old mansion house, standing in the property acquired for the park. The school committee hopes to remodel the house itself for a high school. These buildings are separated from the main street only by the river and railroad track and a baseball field with a slope of the hill that forms a natural amphitheatre behind the ball ground. This makes an ideal recreation center with the remainder of the park stretching in wood and pasture up over the crest of the hill. The Stafford Progressive Federation, a civic organization with representation from various fraternal orders, clubs, churches, has brought field workers of the Playground and Recreation Association of America to give public lectures and address its own membership and has appointed a committee to investigate the matter of hiring a summer playground director. A park of twelve acres between two of the smaller villages and a Community Library and Reading and Game Room in one of the parsonages of the smallest village with junior fair and garden contests further attest the interest of some of the citizens of this conservatively progressive New England town in the recreation crusade.

WITH RURAL RECREATION LEADERS AT RICHMOND

The Recreation Congress in Richmond, Virginia, in 1913 voiced even more strongly than did the Cleveland congress the need of recreation in rural communities and the faith of the leaders in its regenerative influence. Mr. C. C. Carstens of Boston, Secretary and General Agent of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, speaking on the topic "Rural Recreation as a Constructive Force," said that while he was neither country-born nor country-bred his work had taken him so frequently into rural districts where he found all sorts of family conditions that needed remedy that he had come to the conclusion that recreation had a very positive bearing upon the prosperity, the morality, the social morality, and the family life. Through co-operation, productional and distributional co-operation, will come a return of prosperity. "We need not only the greater industry which can be brought about by that social activity that play will provide, but we need to get the point of view of the other fellow. In the country now, when we get beyond the circle of 'neighbor,' the rest have to look out for themselves. We have yet to learn of the 'neighbor' living miles and hundreds of miles away from us."

Keeping Balance at the Test With shorter hours of labor will come time for something besides labor, a higher morality, and less chance of the boy or girl losing balance when free to seek the allurements of the city. "They must have a chance to work and play, right where they are, and must learn to preserve the sane balance of mingling the two, right in their own community, that the natural love of home which is inherent in all may be fostered and stimulated, and that the country may not only hold its own boys and girls but draw from the overcrowded cities men and women who will be given thereby a better opportunity for a happy and useful life."

Country Morality and City Mr. Carstens said there is many a farmer from whom it would be perfectly safe to buy a house and land without fear of trickery from whom it would not be possible for you to buy a cow and be assured that she was not tuberculous. To him this illustrated the difference between the morality of the city and that of the country.

WITH RURAL RECREATION LEADERS AT RICHMOND

Sore Throats from an Open Window!

Along the same line Mr. Wallace Hatch, of Providence, Secretary of the Rhode Island Anti-Tuberculosis Association, related some of his experiences in country schools where sanitation and ventilation seemed unknown. One teacher told him she couldn't air the room or give the students physical exercises when they grew restless because some always complained of sore throats after the windows were opened. Mr. Hatch thought that the play movement might bring greater joy in fresh air and sunshine and thus directly aid the cause of public health.

If asked why the public schools should **What Are the Results?** work for public health, R. C. Stearns, Superintendent of Education of the State of Virginia, said he would reply, "My friends, when Doctors Koch and Pasteur discovered what the germ is and the horrible results that may follow carelessness in sanitation, do you ask me why schools should give attention to it?" In the same way, if asked why he introduced the corn club or the dramatic club, he felt results with and without such activities were a sufficient answer. For full life, children need not only a sound body but a free moving body.

To Ride and Shoot and Tell the Truth

"The old Virginia idea that you should train a boy to ride, to shoot, and to tell the truth was a tribute to the same racial instinct which goes back beyond the Anglo-Saxon and includes every successful nation the world has ever known."

What the Grange Does for Recreation

Not only through the school, but through the granges and farmers' unions can recreation be brought to all the people, was the idea of Judge Algernon T. Sweeney of Newark, New Jersey. The fundamental principle in grange work is the family and men and women meet on an equal footing in offices. In the State of Maine there is a member of the grange to every nine people and one grange owns an auditorium which cost over sixteen thousand dollars. In New York there are over a hundred thousand members of the grange and nearly eighty thousand in Pennsylvania. In the two or three local grange meetings each month, in the four county meetings each year, in the one State and country life meeting, in the corn clubs and public school meets are many opportunities for recreation. The grange

RECREATION AND HIGH COST OF LIVING

is highly organized in each township and as it feels more and more its responsibility for all the township, it may become yet a greater agency for recreation.

The Sight of a Crowd a Recreation The field days conducted by Judge Sweeney's local grange have been very successful examples of social co-operation.

Another splendid play day is that held at Amenia, New York, organized by Professor J. E. Spingarn, formerly of Columbia University. Eight thousand people gathered at Amenia last year—and Professor Spingarn says just the sight of a crowd is a recreation to a secluded country dweller. The idea is to provide games and incidents—not commercial—to draw the crowd, but always to stop just short of complete organization—"to keep it a huge picnic rather than a large class in calisthenics."

"If That Boy Be My Boy"! Another type of village recreation was presented by Rev. C. S. Bullock of New London, Connecticut, who has helped to secure playgrounds and gardens for Noroton Heights, Connecticut. Mr. Bullock said that in recreation work he often thought of John Stuart Mills' remark regarding a new reformatory which had cost a million dollars, "If this institution shall save only one boy it will be worth all it cost!" Later when some one questioned him, saying, "Do you really think this institution might be justified only for one boy?" he replied, "Yes, if that boy be my boy!"

*RURAL RECREATION AND THE HIGH COST OF LIVING**

BERT BALL

Secretary Crop Improvement Committee, Council of Grain Exchanges,
Chicago, Illinois

I represent the national organization of the Grain Exchanges and our ultimate end is a larger yield of better grain. In our zeal to accomplish immediate results we organized a seed improvement committee and attempted to conduct a nation-wide campaign all by ourselves.

We soon found that there were literally hundreds of or-

* Address given at the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, Richmond, Virginia, May 10, 1913

RECREATION AND HIGH COST OF LIVING

ganizations looking after the betterment of rural conditions, so we have made a survey of the field and have tried to become acquainted with the activities of all the other organizations. We found that we could make little or no progress by ourselves because seed selection is only one factor, and that soils, highways, home economics, farm accounting, live stock, dairying, marketing, our boys and girls, our farm women, our bankers, our merchants and commission men, in fact, every man, woman and child in the United States had a direct bearing upon the question.

The County Unit Plan So after attending conferences with all of these different lines of endeavor, we decided that some plan should be made which would be large enough, and yet elastic enough, to be laid as a foundation plan. There has been evolved what is known as the county unit plan, which seeks to furnish opportunity for all of the workers in all of the lines to unite on common ground without the slightest interference with the activities of any organization.

We have been carefully making a survey of each county and have supplied the initiative for each locality to work out its own salvation through a county-wide organization which partakes largely of the nature of a commercial club but also takes cognizance of all productive, marketing and other rural life problems.

These county organizations have adopted various names but the plan through them all is essentially the same. Some have called themselves county farm bureaus, some development associations, and in many instances the already organized and active commercial club has added these subjects to its functions.

Getting Better Grain through Play

This is, we think, as it should be. Now, while it seems that there is little relation between a larger yield of better grain and play, yet nobody knows better than your organization that if recreation is left out of the equation, no plan, however good, may reach its highest success. Froebel struck the keynote when he introduced his system of education. Music is only systematized noise and successful work is only systematized play. Every activity in the world is but a game and the most successful are those who do not take themselves too seriously.

RECREATION AND HIGH COST OF LIVING

Successful business is never drudgery. It may be hard work but so is a Marathon race or any other sport. The spirit of play must permeate everything we do. Even in grim-visaged war every general knows how impossible it is for the troops to march without the inspiration of music. We therefore ask the assistance of your organization to help us add the artistic touch of singing birds, fragrant flowers, and more than all, a community social spirit, to mix through our cake, like a flavoring extract. We cannot do without you and in return we are just as ready to say you cannot do without us.

How to finance what people of the old school would call frivolity is your hardest problem. Therefore when we say that there is a million dollars a year lying under the feet of each community which nobody collects, you can see the immense possibilities of helping us organize our work on a creative basis, so that we can afford to pay something toward the joy of living.

A Half Million Dollars for Playing the Game

In an average corn county there are one hundred thousand acres of corn land. By beginning the game of the germination of seeds with our children, we can add at least an average of ten bushels per acre as a direct result of their play. The game is competitive, without which no game is interesting. We believe in making all of these games interesting and at the same time making them pay their own way. We do not think much of any game which does not finance itself. There is just as much fun in beating each other testing seeds as there is in beating each other in bridge whist, and when you consider that an increase of ten bushels per year on one hundred thousand acres is a million more bushels of corn which nobody ever grew before, you begin to realize that there is half a million dollars locked up in this one item which can be secured by merely playing a game. The details of this interesting game can be seen in illustrations taken in counties where organizations have already been formed in all parts of the United States.

It seems a business-like proceeding that wherever you may have a local organization of your association that it should federate with the other organizations in that county and thus form one of the component parts of a county farm bureau, for we can never succeed without correlation.

SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S GARDENS IN BOSTON.

THOMAS CURLEY

Massachusetts Civic League, Boston, Massachusetts

This outline of the various organized movements for children's gardens in Boston was made by request of the Playground and Recreation Association of America. The surveyor took up the work with all the interest that one has in starting to hunt for a lost gem, and ended it with the joy that one feels who unexpectedly finds the cause, and therefore the probable cure, for the invalid condition of an educational movement of twenty years' standing—a condition aggravated somewhat by physical difficulties, but mostly due to civic and community neglect.

The Cultivated Vacant Lot

Children's gardens in urban communities have three quite well-defined forms. One of these is the cultivated vacant lot in which are a number of separate plots, each assigned to an individual child, all directed by an experienced gardener, and also (if the garden is to be rightly successful) by a good organizer of children. A good example of successful vacant-lot-gardening extending over a period of several years is to be found in Cleveland under the direction of Miss Louise Klein Miller.

The School Garden

A second form, that of the school garden, is quite common in Massachusetts and is well illustrated at the Hyannis Normal School and at the Corbett School in Lynn. The school garden is located in a school yard or in some area controlled by the school authorities. It is usually divided into plots, of which one is given to each child, and is directed by a teacher or other school official experienced in gardening. The child's experience in successful school gardens is correlated with the school work. That is quite an easy thing to do, but is not often done for reasons not creditable to school administrations.

The Home Garden

The third form is called home gardens. These are located either in back or front yards, in window boxes, in boxes on the roof or sometimes in boxes on the backyard fence. When successfully organized, the home garden has an experienced gardener as director and instructor

SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S GARDENS IN BOSTON

of the children as well as a group of adults from the community or neighborhood who act as visitors.

Cincinnati has a system of home gardens carried on under the inspection of the school teachers which seems to be a happy combination.

The visible success of any of these methods depends on the leadership of the director-instructor. The depth of the influence exerted on the child and the community will be briefly discussed at the end of this article.

The First School Garden in 1891

The first school garden in America was started in Boston in 1891 at the George Putnam School by its master, H. L. Clapp. This was not divided into separate plots but was a co-operative enterprise. A part of the value was in gaining knowledge of native plants. The garden was planted for many years with wild flowers and ferns, and after 1899 it included a section for native flowering plants and a kitchen garden. This last was divided after the usual manner of school gardens into small plots cared for by individual children. The Massachusetts Horticultural Society by giving prizes for the best exhibits helped to encourage the experiment. The work was correlated by the master (wise pedagogue) with the class work of the school. A composite of home and vacant lot gardens, the first of either sort in Boston, was a garden for the cultivation of the common vegetables and flowers, started by Mrs. William F. Eastwood in the yard of the Ruggles Street Neighborhood House in 1893. In 1898 Mrs. Eastwood organized, in addition, a movement for home gardens in the neighborhood, in which the element of personal inspection was introduced, supplemented by the giving of prizes and certificates. This work is still actively and successfully carried on.

The Movement Grows

In 1900 the Massachusetts Civic League, in co-operation with the teachers in two of the neighboring grammar schools, started gardens on the Columbus Avenue Playground; and in 1904 there were 235 separate gardens, while in 1905 and 1906 home window boxes were also encouraged by the playground workers. The playground employed a regular garden teacher for this work, and some of the children worked in the gardens under the guidance of their teachers during school hours and as a part of their nature study.

SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S GARDENS IN BOSTON

The Boston Normal School has had gardens off and on, and for a time these were successful. Other experiments have been carried on by the South End Industrial School, by the Boston School Garden Committee, by the Civic Service House—which, being located in the Italian district, went in especially for roof gardens much favored by our Italian citizens—and by other organizations.

The most persistent and successful work has been done by the Boston Social Union, a union of the various settlement houses, which has been successful both with vacant lot gardens—a particularly good one is now being carried on at Sterling Street, Roxbury—and with home gardening. The Elizabeth Peabody House has done especially good work in both directions.

This cursory and brief review of children's garden activities in Boston since Mr. Clapp's first one in 1891 contains suggestions and invites some deductions that might be of use in the future.

What Does the History of Children's Gardens Suggest for the Future?

First, it does not appear that the school gardens have produced a durable, wide and direct effect, on the community, the school or the home; it is direct and everlasting on the child; such also seems to be the experience in many, probably all, of the places where school gardens have been maintained without a permanent and special teacher as director of gardening in the school and even then with difficulty, for one thing, because of the inevitable summer vacation.

With the school director there may be direct action on the school if the garden experience is correlated with the academic work. The failure of children's gardens, after fifteen or twenty years of nursing to get rooted in the Boston school system is probably due partly to the method of organization and somewhat to a pedagogical soil saturated with the old educational ideals; new ideas of education founded on learning by doing, do not easily root in any of us formally educated people.

Vacant lot gardens are very like school gardens in respect to their organization but seem to have a more direct action on the home and neighborhood than the former. They appeal to the boy and girl with instincts of curiosity, construction and acquisition pressing for gratification. Each child must have

SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S GARDENS IN BOSTON

his own lot and the director does well to appeal to competitive instinct by putting the lots into competition, for freedom from weeds, quality and amount of product. An ugly, sculsh-covered lot is an open and permanent corrupter of the morals of the neighborhood and the children; a lot covered with beds growing vegetables and flowers is not surpassed as a force for the elevation of the primitive morals of youth and the development of their aesthetic sense, by any art from human hands; and the influence of a lot filled with children and flowers, on the neighborhood can be understood, once seen; a boy will often stop to take a look in at the growing mystery; and that God-made beauty will enter him because it is of his world.

The Vacant Lot Garden Appeals More than the School Garden

In view of the success of vacant lot gardens in many other cities and even here, it is not easily understood why they have not been more numerous in Boston. Their influence on the home and neighborhood when rightly organized is direct and effective; much more so than the school garden; because it may be anything connected with the school still seems to the average mortal, formal, distant, and impracticable, not made to be used; the vacant lot is nearer the home environment in character and location; if such forbidding conditions as often exist on it can be so easily transformed into attractive spots by children from the streets, many seem to say, "We adults ought easily to do as well;" the vacant lot suggests more hope and less fear than a school garden; school gardens become so neglected during summer vacations even when they have leadership that they are not inspiring; somehow school yard gardens do not command as much interest in the child as vacant lots.

Permanent Work

The Home Garden in Boston is today the only children's garden movement in existence in Boston that was started more than three years ago, thanks to the good organization by and devotion of the Boston Social Union and its members. It seems to be permanent in the neighborhood of the Ruggles Street Neighborhood Home, the South End Industrial School, the Civic Service Houses and the Elizabeth Peabody. The Union's organization of the work is based on the successful experience of many other communities, namely:—a system of inspection of the home efforts; this inspection consists in visiting the home three or four times

SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S GARDENS IN BOSTON

during the season; first advising as to location, soil and watering and planting seed; in subsequent visits advising as to cause of prospective failure of the plants to grow; thereby the household is gradually educated to grow flowers and vegetables properly; the effect on the child is stronger because his sometimes flagging interest is reinforced by the awakened interest of the family group, and his garden is more his own, if a part of the home environment and a contribution to its attractiveness—in short, the co-operative spirit is there. By offering prizes or certificates for especial merit of some of the many features of a home garden the gardens are put into competition by appeal to that old reliable competitive instinct, welding the youthful gardeners into a homogeneous group.

The Garden Reaches the Home and Neighbors

A study of children's home gardens in any town or city reveals the fact that in addition to the direct influence of gardening on the child, the home garden directly influences the home because it is a part of it and reaches the family group; it reacts on the community because if in a yard it is a part of the environment and appeals to the neighbors as a simple home-made object of beauty. If organized, as it has been for many years in Cleveland and Waltham, for example, it can be co-ordinated with the public school and perform the function that all wise educators hope to see it performing in all the schools of the land.

The all-round educative value of gardening is recognized by all modern educators, therefore I will not elaborate the idea. As a basis for elevated recreation, whose importance is rapidly focussing the attention of the thoughtful, gardening affords one of the best means of developing the æsthetic sense—indeed, it is about the only means of making Nature's varieties of color and form accessible to the city child.

I am indebted to the assistant secretary of the Boston Social Union for much of the information herein of garden activities in Boston since 1905.

SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S GARDENS IN BOSTON

CITIES WHICH IN NOVEMBER, 1912, REPORTED GARDENING AMONG THEIR ACTIVITIES.

CALIFORNIA	MASSACHUSETTS	Columbus
Kentfield	Boston	Dayton
Los Angeles	Lawrence	E. Liverpool
Marysville	Leominster	Hamilton
Oakland	Newton	Springfield
Pasadena	Northampton	Tiffin
Sacramento	Waltham	Youngstown
San Francisco	Worcester	
Santa Barbara		
COLORADO	MICHIGAN	PENNSYLVANIA
Ft. Collins	Battle Creek	Corry
CONNECTICUT	MINNESOTA	Lancaster
Hartford	Hibbing	New Kensington
Meriden	Little Falls	Philadelphia
New Britain	St. Paul	Pittsburgh
Torington	MISSOURI	Pittsburgh, N. S.
Waterbury	Kirksville	Reading
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	NEW JERSEY	Scranton
Washington	Bayonne	Steelton
GEORGIA	East Orange	Wilkes-Barre
Atlanta	Jersey City	Williamsport
ILLINOIS	Montclair	York
Chicago	Newark	
Granite City	Summit	
INDIANA	Trenton	
Terre Haute	NEW YORK	TEXAS
IOWA	Buffalo	Beaumont
Cedar Falls	Fredonia	Texarkana
KENTUCKY	Lackawanna	Wichita Falls
Covington	Mt. Vernon	
LOUISIANA	New York City	
New Orleans	Sag Harbor	
	Schenectady	
	Watertown	
	NORTH DAKOTA	VERMONT
	Fessenden	St. Albans
	OHIO	
	Cleveland	
		VIRGINIA
		Fredericksburg
		Lynchburg
		WASHINGTON
		Toppenish
		WISCONSIN
		Madison
		Superior
		CANADA—NOVA
		SCOTIA
		Amherst

A SUGGESTION FOR CONSTRUCTIVE WORK IN PLAYGROUNDS

JOHN B. STEINERT

Teacher of Shop-work, Stuyvesant High School, New York City

Suggestion may be a delightful way to introduce forms of constructive play. This constructive play, not by schedule, may be made into a number of games. A work-bench supplied with tools and wood set up somewhere in the playground, with a skilled mechanic at work at the bench will attract much attention—especially if his work consists of making models of toy boats, wagons or sleds. It will not be long before crude imitations of models will appear on the playgrounds. Suppose the mechanic were to make a few simple telegraph keys and sounders—any boy can make them—that playground would soon have a new game—sending messages by real electricity. Of course it would not last, but why should it last after the idea has been developed? Other things will be more profitable.

Once started in this kind of pastime, the boys would make their own suggestions as to what form it should take next.

Girls are more resourceful than boys when it comes to play-time. By nature they copy their mothers in make-believe housekeeping, sewing and cooking. A leader can give this play direction by suggesting how it may be worked into a play illustrating some event in history.

**A Young Woman's
Christian Association
Pageant**

An exquisitely beautiful pageant, "The Ministering of the Gift," was presented by the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States assembled in the Fourth Biennial Convention at Richmond, Virginia. The various episodes were prepared by various Associations in their own cities.

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another" provides the theme for visualizing the Association and its potentialities through its work in the colleges, in the open country, in the city, and in other lands, with the epilogue consisting of the Charge delivered by the Association Spirit and the Hymn of Lights—

A SONG FESTIVAL

"To Thee we own allegiance,
May our devotion sweep from sea to sea;
Even as we the gift from Thee receiving
Joyfully minister that gift for Thee."

The Book of the Pageant may be secured from the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations, 600 Lexington Avenue, New York City. The Pageant was repeated in New York during the month of November.

A Song Festival

The spring song festival held by the Pittsburgh Playground Association represented the higher standards of taste in music developed through a number of years of work with older boys and girls. Among the songs were *Carnival*, Molloy; *All Through the Night*, from the Welsh; *Day is Dying*, Raeckel. The prize was won by an Italian Choral singing *Santa Lucia*.

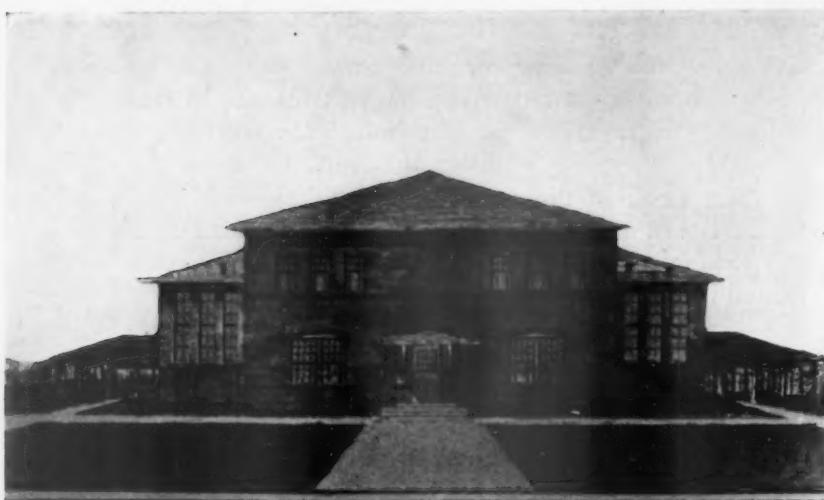
School Children Helping Support Play Centers

The Constitution of the Indianapolis Playground Association provides for the membership of school children above the sixth grade in groups. Each group elects ten representatives to the Association from its members. Each group member is assessed ten cents, not collected where its payment would work a hardship, seven of which are sent to the city organization. The Playground and Recreation Association of America would be glad to learn whether other cities have tried such a plan and what its success has been.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC.
Of THE PLAYGROUND, published monthly at New York, N. Y., required by the Act
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Owners, PLAYGROUND AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, 1 Madison Ave., New
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Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders, holding 1 per cent.
or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: There are none.
(Signed) H. S. BRAUCHER, *Editor*
(Seal)

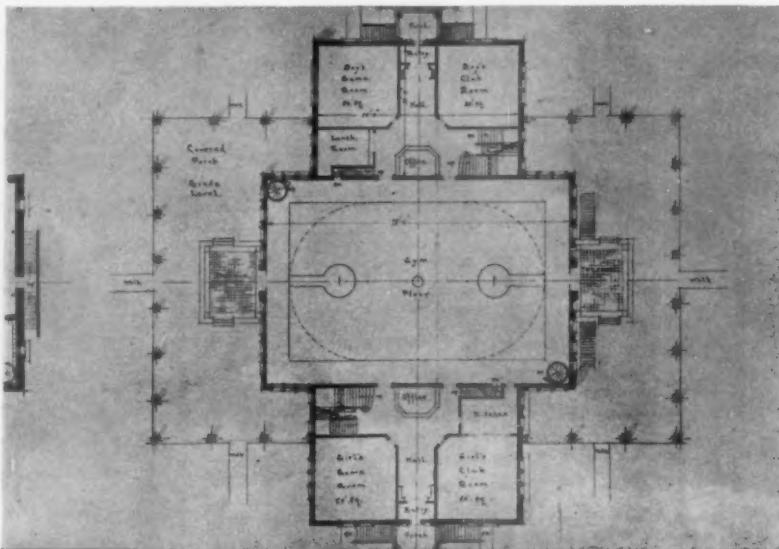
Sworn to and subscribed before
me this fifteenth day of September, 1913
EDGAR T. KINGSLEY,
Notary Public, New York County, No. 153
New York Register, No. 4165
Term expires March 30, 1914



Columbus, Ohio.

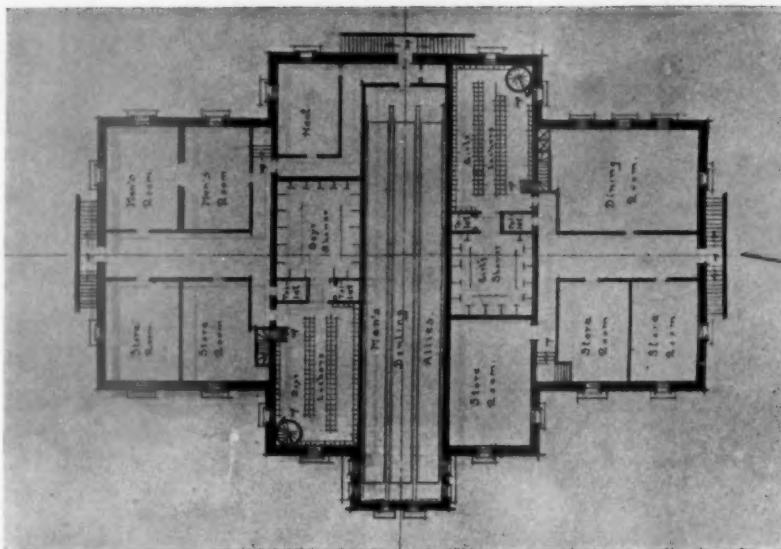
PROPOSED RECREATION BUILDING

Criticisms or suggestions upon these plans will be welcomed by the Playground and Recreation Association of America. This building is to be used as a park shelter house and picnic house also.



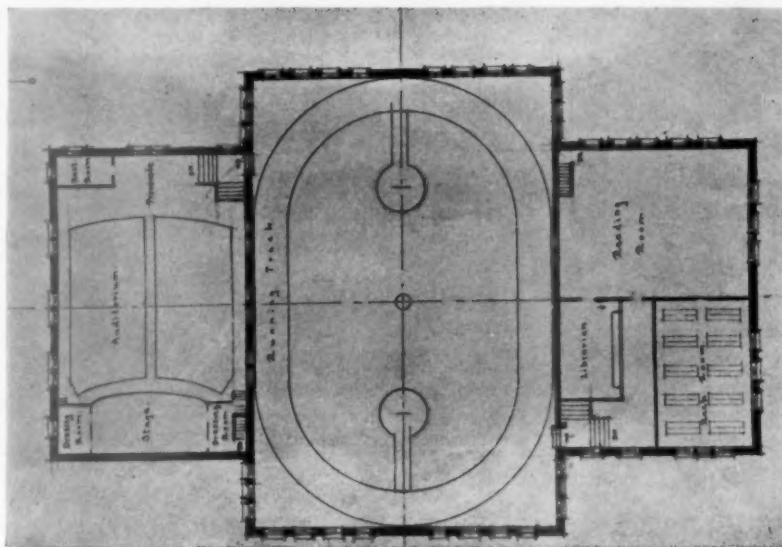
Columbus, Ohio.

FIRST FLOOR



Columbus, Ohio.

BASEMENT



Columbus, Ohio.

SECOND FLOOR

WOODWORK AS A FORM OF PLAY



John B. Steinert.

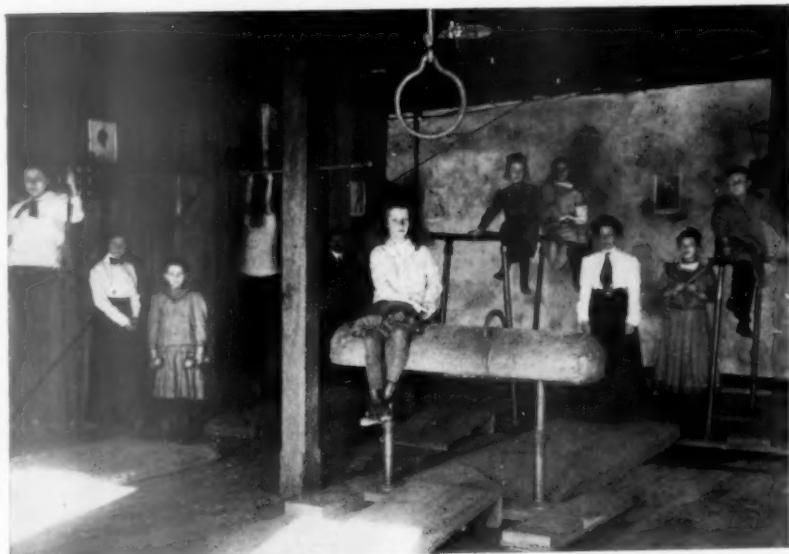
MODEL MADE FOR THE HUDSON-FULTON CELEBRATION



John B. Steinert.

MODEL MADE FOR THE HUDSON-FULTON CELEBRATION

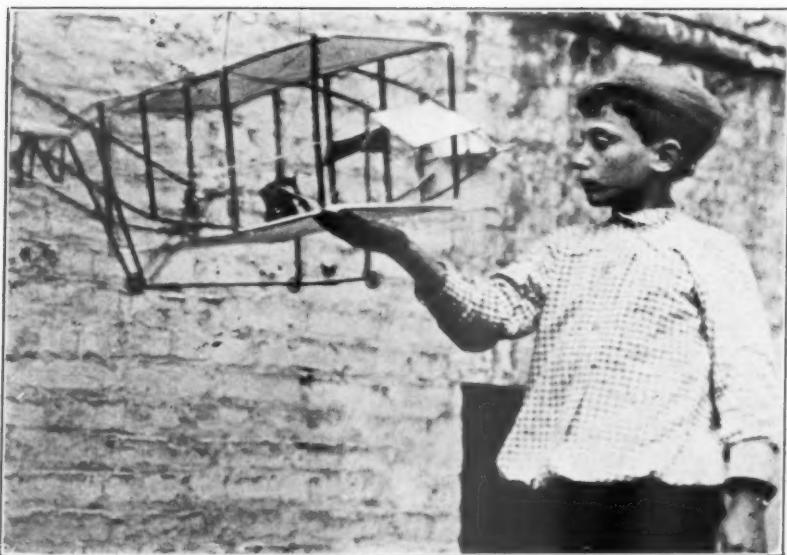
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